

Conservation and Protection in Fisheries Management

The management of Canadian fisheries means ensuring the fullest sustainable use of the resource without compromising the long-term survival of the fishery base. This approach requires the integration of monitoring, control and surveillance.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) fisheries management uses the *Precautionary approach* to deploy fishery officers to air, sea and land patrols, observer coverage on fishing vessels, dockside monitoring, and remote electronic monitoring. These *Conservation and Protection* (C&P) activities are designed to ensure compliance with Canadian legislation, policies and fishing plans relating to the conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resource.

Fisheries Management functions take place in Canadian oceans (within and adjacent to 200-mile fisheries zones), inland river systems and transboundary rivers in all provinces and territories. They are also responsible for negotiating international arrangements to advance Canada's C&P interests, and to maintain international treaties and agreements affecting bilateral and multilateral fisheries relations with other countries.

With the decline of some fish stocks and the closure of other fisheries, the need for more effective and strengthened enforcement capacity has become increasingly important to ensure the responsible management of Canada's fisheries. Reduced stocks have had dramatic economic impacts on fishers and their communities on both coasts. In addition, there has been a rising number of violation reports for dumping, discarding, high-grading, use of illegal fishing gear, transshipping and fishing in closed areas. These types of offences can have extremely serious implications for the achievement of conservation objectives.

To address these challenges, DFO will spend \$41.1M of its Budget 2000 funds over the next three years to improve the conservation and protection of fisheries through increased departmental enforcement capacity.

Fishery Enforcement Officers and Vehicles

Fishery Officers are key to ensuring the responsible management and sustainable use of the fisheries resource. There are currently 614 full-time, and 161 seasonal, Fishery Officers at DFO who operate a fleet of program vessels on each coast to patrol closed and boundary areas, and conduct inspections at sea to ensure compliance with all of the Department's fishing regulations. These officers also use contracted aircraft to monitor, locate and track fishing fleets and to detect violations.



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The Department deploys contracted observers on all foreign vessels fishing in Canadian waters and on some Canadian vessels. These observers gather scientific information and provide on-site monitoring of compliance. They also report infractions such as dumping/discarding, fishing in closed areas, catch misreporting, retention of prohibited catch or the use of illegal gear.

Dockside monitors and observers provide another means of verifying the amount and type of fish landed. By monitoring the offloading of fishery catches ashore, fish stocks can be evaluated, and fisheries management decisions can be adjusted accordingly. This effort is complemented by random vessel inspections carried out by Fishery Officers at landing sites.

DFO's fisheries management team establishes rules and regulations on methods of harvesting, and Fishery Officers monitor the harvest and verify the size of fish landings to ensure that licence holders are honouring the rules of the fishery. These efforts are complemented with capacity-reduction programs such as the *Canadian Fisheries Adjustment and Restructuring* (CFAR) plan and the *Pacific Fisheries Adjustment and Restructuring* (PFAR) program. The magnitude of this management operation is staggering. In British Columbia alone, the Department manages 9,000 different salmon stocks.

Integrated Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

Large patrol vessels are very expensive to own and operate and, although they provide a visible "at-sea" enforcement presence and enable Fishery Officers to conduct "at-sea" boardings and inspections, their range of coverage of the fishing fleet is limited. As a result, most jurisdictions are investigating alternatives that may provide better results at a more reasonable cost.

The Department uses an integrated monitoring, control and surveillance (IMCS) program that is less reliant on large patrol vessels and emphasizes improved integration of surveillance data and increased involvement of the fishing industry in finding solutions to conservation concerns. And, while certain fisheries and areas will continue to require dedicated patrol vessel coverage these vessels are operated more and more in a "reactive" manner.

The IMCS program entails the application of new surveillance technology and more strategic deployment of surveillance and enforcement resources based on integrated data and its analysis. The key element of IMCS, the integration and analysis of data, will also address the particular conservation risks to an identified fishery.

Over time, with the assistance of DFO Science and IMCS data, the fisheries industry will assume greater responsibility for conservation management through the identification of conservation risks, and the development of self-regulating systems to control and manage these risks. The intent is to shift away from the current and expensive approach to regulatory enforcement, moving ahead to shared accountability

for sustainable utilization of fishery resources. DFO's development of a *Canadian Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing Operations* with the industry attests to a collective interest in sustainable practices and a willingness to accept responsibility for conservation objectives in concert with government via compliance with a voluntary code.

Budget 2000

With the decline of some fish stocks and the closure of other fisheries, the need for more effective and strengthened enforcement capacity has become increasingly important to ensure the responsible management of Canada's fisheries.


DFO will therefore spend \$41.1 million over the next three years to strengthen the operating capability of front-line Fishery Officers, including additional enforcement presence, more full-time Fishery Officers and increased overtime and operating funds. These funds will also be applied to the modernization of monitoring, control and surveillance programs through the adoption of new surveillance technologies and integrated information systems, together with increasing the involvement of the fishing industry in the conservation and protection of fisheries resources. Overall, the mix of enforcement mechanisms will be adjusted to better respond to changing program requirements.

This year, DFO will spend:

- \$6.2 million to augment Fishery Officer capacity through the conversion of 161 Fishery Officer positions to full-time, including additional overtime and operating funds, and introduction of improved levels of training and supervision.
- \$7.5 million for the modernization of monitoring, control and surveillance systems, including the testing and adaptation of state-of-the art surveillance technologies such as satellite transponders, and development of improved integrated resource management planning.

The injection of money into increased enforcement effort will affect 161 seasonal Fishery Officers and will translate into 65 new officer equivalents across Canada: 11 in Quebec, 36 in the Atlantic provinces and 18 on the west coast.

New money is only one part of DFO's long-term financial stability. The Department is maintaining its efforts to keep costs down, retire unnecessary or inefficient assets, and look for smarter and better ways to work efficiently.



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